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(which has now about 6000 entries of the English-Andamanese part only), and the corrected grammar will be published in course of time. They are obviously of great importance to the Indian Government, on account of its penal settlement at Port Blair, and are well worthy of its patronage.

The Andamanese have poetry, and that of a most remarkable kind. Their only musical instrument is a stamping board to keep time, and to this rhythm everything seems to be sacrificed. The words, their order, the prefixes, the suffixes, the postpositions, are all more or less changed, the order of the words suffers, in short the poetical language requires a special study, which is the more difficult to give, as songs are always impromptu, and not, as a rule, sung again after the one occasion for which they were composed, and then only by the composer. Of the music Mr. Man regrets to state that he is unable to give any information, as he is, unfortunately, totally unacquainted with the subject. The following specimen of a song composed by the *jam·bu*, to whom the above letters were addressed, after his liberation from a six months' imprisonment, about 1865, for having shot down a sailor whom he found taking liberties with his wife, was given to Mr. Man by the author.

I. As it was sung.

Solo. *ngō do kūk l'ārtâ·lngi·ka,*
mô·ro el·ma kâ igbâ·dâ·la
mô·ro el·mo lē aden·yarâ
pô-tôt lāh.

Chorus. *aden·yarâ pô-tôt lāh.*

II. Literal Translation of the Poetry.

thou heart sad
sky surface there look-at
sky surface of ripple
bamboo spear.

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III. PROSE ANDAMANESE VERSION BY MR. MAN. 533 538 195

ŋgôl kûk l'àrtâ·lagike
mô·ro el·ma len kâ·to igbâ·dignga bêdig,
mô·ro el·ma lī·a ew·yar len igbâ·dignga bêdig
pô-tôg len tūg·imike.

IV. LITERAL TRANSLATION OF PROSE VERSION.

thou heart-sad-art
sky-surface to there looking while,
sky-surface of ripple to looking while,
bamboo spear on lean-dost.

V. FREE TRANSLATION OF PROSE VERSION.

thou art sad at heart,
gazing there at the sky's surface,
gazing at the ripple on the sky's surface,
leaning on the bamboo spear.

The rhythm, as read by Mr. Man, was:

-- -- | -- | --
-- | -- | - | ---
-- | -- | -- | ---
- | - | -

The syllables marked - were of medial length. There were two short syllables at the end of the second and third lines. The three long syllables in the fourth line were very long and slow, each filling up a whole measure. Strange as some of the changes and omissions were, this is one of the least altered of the songs in Mr. Temple's grammar. We must suppose the man to be standing before his companions after liberation from prison, gazing sadly at the sky again and resting on his bamboo spear, and then the action would make the words intelligible.

An important question arises as to the durability of the 000

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rule the multiplication and growth of the various animals and plants useful to Man.

The Onges do not love Eiuga, or any of the other spirits. They merely fear them, and seek to evade their anger by various expedients. It is curious that they never hesitate to try and deceive the spirits and think themselves very clever when they manage to steal roots or tubers from the ground. Nor do they revere the spirits of their ancestors; these are to be feared and propitiated by preservation of their bones. By definition none of the spirits, since they can be deceived by simple tricks, can be all-powerful, but this conclusion, simple though it is, is still beyond the Onges' powers of reasoning.

The Onges' fear of the dead is instanced by their carrying round their necks the *ibidanghe*, or necklet of human jaws, as a propitiation. The wearing of the bones prevents the spirit from going away (by analogy the bones of dead enemies are burned to force the spirit, clearly a hostile one, to leave the place). The custom of burial within the communal hut follows the same logic – the spirits of the dead are kept near their bones and hence near their relatives, to help them in the daily round of hunting, fishing and gathering food.[1]

Unlike most of the other peoples whose burial customs are even today based on their underlying principles, the Onges have not progressed beyond the stage of relating the dead directly to the demands of daily life; they have no 'practices' of any kind, no concept at all of holy places, prayers or images. Even the very names of the dead are soon forgotten. Their fears, however, are none the less very real. They do not like to speak of Eiuga or even of the lesser spirits, for fear of attracting their attention.

The Onges have no stories or explanatory legends, like those reported by Brown for Great Andaman. They have only short epics, if such they may be called, recalling extraordinary events in

[1] This belief is of very remote origin, and can be traced back at least to the megaliths of southern Asia, like the splendid ones which I was able to photograph, among others, in the mountains of Travancore. Here again the object was to prevent the dead from leaving their relatives. Similar ideas are found today in India among several tribes, notably the Munda, or Nias, and among various peoples of Indonesia, and even Oceania. The rituals are probably followed today without any understanding of their meaning or symbolism; the details vary from place to place, but the underlying principle, the original fear, remains the same everywhere.

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their hunting and fishing, or contacts with strangers, which are loudly chanted, accompanied by miming and dancing, during their nocturnal celebrations. One was sung and danced in my honour; Cendubai,[1] head of the Lulera hut, much struck by the sight of me in my hammock slung between two trees on nylon cords, delivered himself of a warning over the danger I was running using such thin cords. At the end of each 'verse' the refrain '*cué-cian-ghégheébée-chéle*' (he will hurt himself) repeated his fear of the cords breaking.

Hunting and fishing episodes are to the Onges less interesting than themes like my safety, because to them they lack the repetitive refrain. In their dances, on the other hand, they prefer something else, to us monotonous, but for them always new, and even exciting; more than anything they love to dance the stages of courtship to its culmination, with the help of words and extraordinarily (to Western eyes regrettably) vivid gestures.

Birds, to the Onges, harbour the spirits of the dead, and it is for this reason that they are never eaten, contrary to the assertions of Brown.[2] Similar fears extend to lizards, the jungle cats, bats, rats and snakes. I have confirmed this among both the Onges and the Arioto. The latter even refused to eat some fat pigeons which I offered them not knowing of the taboo; they accepted the gifts, but the pigeons were eventually eaten by my own men. And the Onges whom I took with me to Port Blair for a few days refused point blank to eat pigeon or chicken.

The spirits select the Onges' food for them, in the sense that they regard everything as edible or poisonous, according to whether the guardian spirit is benign or malevolent. Given the curious adaptability of the spirits and the intensely practical way in which they operate it is hardly surprising that their benevolence or malignity coincides remarkably well with those foods which tend to promote normal health!

[1] I was sorry to learn that Cendubai died suddenly in 1955 aged barely forty.

[2] Curiously enough, while the Onges' fears lead them to reject out of hand any food of animal origin which is unknown to them, the same does not apply to vegetable foods. They ate half-rotten fruit, which I offered them, even though they had never seen it before, and they clamoured for rice and tea, so much so that in order to prevent them becoming addicted to the rice, as so often happens when primitive peoples meet a new food, I insisted on receiving equal quantities of yams in exchange for the rice and very sweet tea, to slow down their demands.

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metres in diameter. They are now used for the holy water in the new church of San Piero in Palco, in Florence, like those in the church of St Sulpice in Paris. Two valves of *T. gigas*, rather smaller, are being used for the same purpose in the church of Marco Polo in Viareggio.

Among the creatures the Onges hunt on the shores are crayfish, which can be taken in plenty in the streams of Little Andaman, although I found none on Great Andaman or in the Nicobars. As they were so common I assumed they were a known species and did not bother to collect any. In Madras, however, an expert on freshwater crustacea, Sri Sada Siva, told me that this appeared to be a new species and it would be well worth while returning to Little Andaman to collect further specimens, as the few I had brought are now lost. There are tens of thousands of them everywhere.

These freshwater crayfish are so tasty that they have entered into Onge folklore, and their tastiness is praised in song. They are baked on burning embers, without salt, as always, and just the charred shell is removed before they are eaten. The clean fresh water in which they live prevents any taint in the flavour. I must confess to having eaten them every day without realizing their importance as a possible new species. They are fairly large, about fifteen centimetres long, and almost black, in natural imitation of the dark rocks among which they try to vanish out of sight, although the Onges never fail to spot them. The males have slender pereiopods, with claws almost twice as long as the whole body; these the creatures thrust out before them, and so slender are they that it is difficult to catch a male with both pereiopods intact. After hatching, the young, which are identical with the adults as soon as they hatch and can therefore be sexed by the presence and absence of pereiopods, cling bunched together for several weeks, attached by their claws to their mother's swimmerets before making their way into the troubled waters of the rivers, where the great carp are waiting to prey on them.

Yet another freshwater creature eagerly sought by the Onges is one that is almost black in colour, a strange survival of some remote geological era. Like other members of the family it has no scales, and the mouth, armed with teeth, is not protractile. On Little Andaman I saw several specimens weighing over a kilogram, and